



The Initiative



The initiative at a glance

→ **EcoTopTen products are designed for the mass market**, they are high-quality and high-technology products which offer value for money and – of course – are green. EcoTopTen is a prestigious and highly desirable umbrella label.

→ **EcoTopTen meets modern consumer requirements:** for all-round quality products, professional information, and a focus on products of particular relevance in terms of environmental impact. EcoTopTen offers consumers credible recommendations on a range of attractive products and helps them make an environmentally sensible product choice.

→ **The (new) development of products and innovative marketing strategies** is supported by PROSA (Product Sustainability Assessment) and consumer research, and is coordinated with manufacturing companies, the retail trade and consumer organizations.

→ **The EcoTopTen product criteria** are based upon existing criteria, to the extent possible, but are ultimately set by the independent Institute for Applied Ecology (Öko-Institut). They represent the best possible compromise – maximum environmental acceptability with outstanding sales success!

→ **The EcoTopTen campaign** and its unusual parameters make consumers and media keen to find out more. Awareness-raising activities and targeted events help manufacturers and retailers market their EcoTopTen products.

→ **EcoTopTen shall be broadened as a EU-wide initiative** and supported by a sister initiative, known as EcoTopTen-Business, which shall focus on public-sector and large-scale private sector procurement.



EcoTopTen project objectives

The overall objective of the EcoTopTen project is to develop and market sustainable products and services for the mass market – supported by consumer research and a campaign involving awareness-raising activities and targeted events. EcoTopTen products are high-quality, affordable and – of course – green. The campaign focuses on 10 product fields of particular relevance in terms of environmental impact, and the most important products within these fields.

The production, use and disposal of these products currently cause around two-thirds of total environmental impacts in Germany.

The EcoTopTen product fields are: construction&housing, car/rail&cycling, foods, kitchen (refrigerators and freezers, cookers, dishwashers), textiles, bathroom (washing machines/driers), information&communication equipment, consumer electronics (TV/video), electricity, and investment/old-age-provision products.

In each of these product fields, one or several products are newly developed or further developed and supported in marketing, a focus being placed on new target-group-specific marketing approaches. Examples of EcoTopTen products are high-mileage cars, the Bahncard rail fare scheme in combination with car sharing, the T-Net-Box (virtual answering machine) or certified green electricity.



Project participants and project duration

The project is managed by the Institute for Applied Ecology in conjunction with the Institute for Social-Ecological Research (ISOE, Institut für sozial-ökologische Forschung, conducting consumer research) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

Major and small companies alike, as well as industry associations (including Volkswagen, Deutsche Telekom, Loewe, Henkel, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, Deutsche Bahn, Lichtblick, and the German federation of personal hygiene and detergent industries IKW) are directly involved in product development and marketing. The EcoTopTen criteria ultimately defined are open to all products and companies that comply with them. The project is supported by a range of organizations, especially through cooperation on innovative marketing strategies.

EcoTopTen is currently the largest consumer-focused initiative spanning entire product fields.

EcoTopTen shall be supported by a sister initiative – EcoTopTen-Business – focussing on public-sector and large-scale private sector procurement. Moreover, EcoTopTen shall be broadened as a EU-wide initiative. The conceptualization phase will have been completed by the end of 2003. The overall project and the EcoTopTen campaign shall run until the end of 2006.



LOEWE.



Procter&Gamble



u.v.a.

The EcoTopTen campaign

Simply on account of its unusual project parameters and the cooperation between brand manufacturers, the retail trade and environmental/consumer organizations, EcoTopTen will attract a great deal of publicity.

This is enhanced through a range of highly effective high-profile marketing activities and competitions.



The elements of the EcoTopTen initiative shall be presented to the public in conjunction with a 'viral' or 'whispering' marketing campaign. Presentations of EcoTopTen products shall be spread across the whole period of the product campaign. The reason for this staggered approach is to heighten public interest through regular product launches; it would also scarcely be possible to agree simultaneous product launches with several different manufacturers.

High-profile activities and events featuring celebrities, environmental and consumer organizations, schools and local authorities (involving mail-shots to association members, competitions, E-Bay auctions of sponsored EcoTopTen products etc.) and media partnerships are key elements of the campaign. Marketing strategies are product-specific and target-group-specific.

New Ecology:

Das Öko-Institut e.V. bringt zusammen, was zusammen gehört. Umwelt und Wirtschaft. Eco TopTen ist eine Auszeichnung für Produkte, die technologisch und ökologisch innovativ sind. Von der Herstellung bis zur Entsorgung. Achten Sie auf dieses Zeichen und helfen Sie mit, die Dinge zusammen zu bringen, die zusammen gehören. Für eine bessere Umwelt. Mehr Informationen unter: www.ecotopten.de (in Arbeit)

Project design

The Institute for Applied Ecology has sole responsibility for coordinating the EcoTopTen initiative. **The Institute therefore also initiates and is responsible for the setting of criteria, taking on the role of a process mediator:** The individual criteria are set so that the products match the EcoTopTen objectives (substantial reduction in environmental impact, mass market appeal etc.), are genuinely manufactured, with optimum listing by the trade, and are accepted and supported by consumer and environmental organizations. The Institute cooperates with companies and support organizations on individual product initiatives and special marketing activities. Direct agreements may also be reached between companies/retail trade and the support organizations. As far as possible, there shall be no competition with the environmentally related quality labels already awarded to products, notably the existing eco-label schemes. On the contrary, every effort is made to integrate existing environmental quality schemes into the EcoTopTen initiative. To maximize synergies, there is linkage with ongoing product initiatives, which cover some of the EcoTopTen fields.



The project will be carried out in two phases. The pilot phase until the end of 2003 involved above all Volkswagen AG with its Lupo car (consuming only 3 litres of petrol per 100 km), Deutsche Telekom with its T-Net-Box (substituting individual telephone answering and fax equipment), the German federation of personal hygiene and detergent industries (Industrieverband Körperpflege und Waschmittel, IKW) with products for environmentally friendly washing and household appliances, and the TV equipment manufacturer Loeue. This phase involved selection of other prospective EcoTopTen products and companies. The second phase (2004–2006) will begin with the high-profile EcoTopTen campaign, while further EcoTopTen products will be established in parallel. Preparations for the EcoTopTen-Business initiative and for broadening the project to the European level or to further EU member countries are in progress.

Consumers expect all-round quality products and professional advice

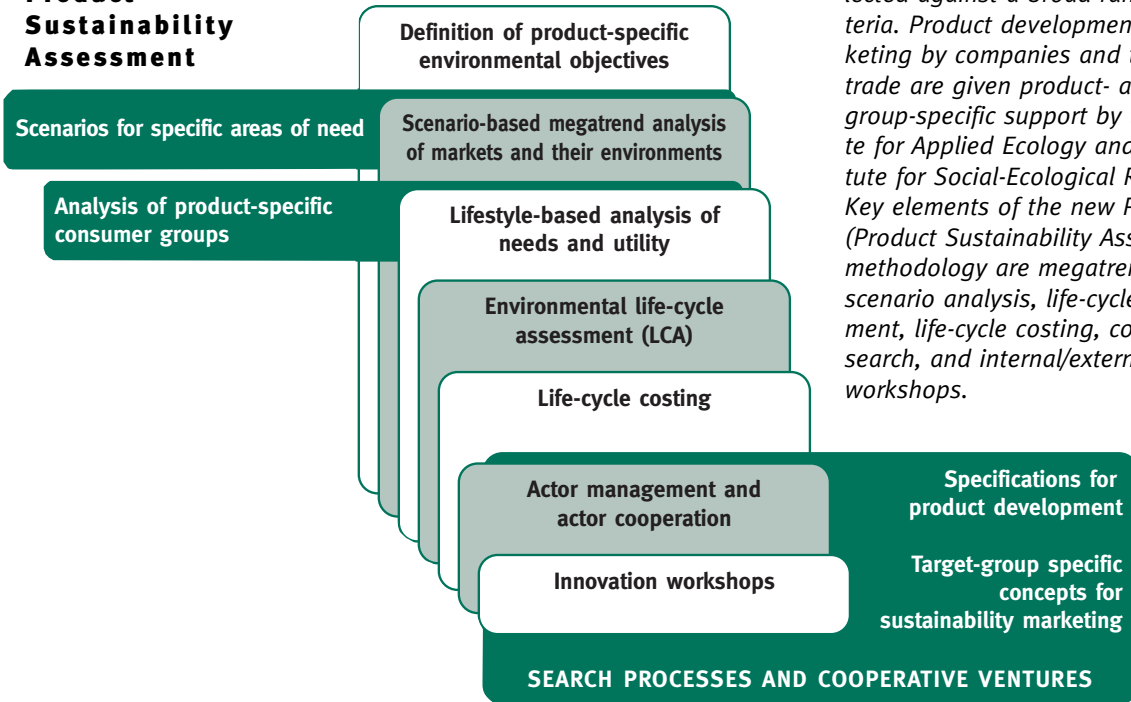
In the last ten years, consumers' attitudes to environmental issues have changed. The level of environmental awareness among consumers is still high, but there is a considerable discrepancy between awareness and environmental purchasing behaviour – environmental protection alone does not motivate decisions on product purchase. The products must be attractive in all respects. Many people tend to associate "green" products with poor quality and Spartan attitudes to life. But consumers want all-round quality products – such as those recommended by EcoTopTen! Consumers are also no longer prepared to wade through vast quantities of consumer advice manuals dealing with many different products – they want clear and concise information focussing on key products. EcoTopTen offers this as well.



Product development support

PROSA

Product Sustainability Assessment



The products are checked and selected against a broad range of criteria. Product development and marketing by companies and the retail trade are given product- and target-group-specific support by the Institute for Applied Ecology and the Institute for Social-Ecological Research. Key elements of the new PROSA (Product Sustainability Assessment) methodology are megatrend and scenario analysis, life-cycle assessment, life-cycle costing, consumer research, and internal/external actor workshops.

Product marketing support

Consumer research in EcoTopTen

A main focus of consumer research and the development of marketing methods is cooperation with the retail trade and consumer organizations, as well as target-group-specific marketing strategies. This opens up a range of entirely new opportunities for participating companies.



Source: ISOE

Examples include joint award schemes, major ordering campaigns by consumer groups, direct support by organizations (mailshots, features in members' magazines, sales support through licensed mail order businesses, bulk purchasing with special discounts, coordinated campaigns with local members' groups) or public procurement specifications.

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EcoTopTen products

At present, the following product initiatives are being evaluated for EcoTopTen inclusion. Some of them may not be adopted in practice (if they fail to meet EcoTopTen criteria or are unlikely to sell well). Other products may be added during the next three years.

10 product fields	Potential EcoTopTen products, services and initiatives EcoTopTen-Business products
Construction & housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condensing boilers • Wood-pellet heating systems • Energy-saving lamps • 3-litre new prefabricated construction (needing the equivalent of 3 litres heating oil annually per m² floor space) • 6-litre retrofitting of existing buildings • Stationary fuel cells <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> 6-litre retrofitting of existing buildings</p>
Car, rail & cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-mileage car fleet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 3-litre small car (3 litres fuel per 100 km driven) · 4-litre mid-range car · 4.5-litre family car • Bahncard rail fare scheme in combination with car sharing • Bicycles (safe and low-maintenance) <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> As above</p>
Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full range of certified organic groceries (in both conventional and specialized retail) <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> Canteens (companies, universities) with wholefoods / organic foods</p>
EcoTopTen Kitchen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrigerators – “Super-A Energy Class” (upper A-class plus additional features) • Freezers – “Super-A Energy Class” (upper A-class plus additional features) • Gas cookers • Electric water heaters • Dishwashers – “Triple-A Class” (plus additional features) <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> As above, special equipment</p>
Textiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full range of ecological textiles in retail shops <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> Work clothes</p>
EcoTopTen Bathroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-kg washing machines – “Triple-A Class” (plus additional features) • Driers – “A-Class” (heat pump driers, gas driers) <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> As above, special equipment</p>
Information & communication equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-Net-Box (virtual answering machine) • Printers • Flat panel displays • Recycled paper <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> PCs / notebooks / subnotebooks, video conferencing systems / Netmeeting</p>
Consumer electronics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined TV/video/DVD sets • Multifunctional equipment • Flat panel TV sets with PC connection
Electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified green electricity <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> As above</p>
Investment and old-age-provision products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable investment funds and old-age-provision products <p><u>EcoTopTen-Business:</u> Sustainable pension funds</p>



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